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NANTWICH
URBAN DISTRICT.

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1900.

NANTWICH :

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NANTWICH URBAN DISTRICT.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health FOR THE YEAR 1900.

Medical Officer of Health :—DR. J DOUGLAS MUNRO.

Population at Census, 1891 :—7412.

Estimated Population in middle of 1900 :—7650.

Area in Acres :—703.

Birth-rate per 1000 living :—28·7.

Death-rate per 1000 living :—20.

Death-rate from seven principal Zymotic diseases :—2·09.

Deaths under one year to 1000 Births :—150.

During 1900 the number of Births registered in the District was 220.

The number of deaths registered was 147. However, fifteen of these deaths took place in the Workhouse Female Hospital, and twelve of these were of persons not belonging to the town. On the other hand eighteen men died in the Men's Hospital (Nantwich Rural District), who belonged to the town of Nantwich. The number of deaths belonging to the Urban District was therefore 153.

The mean birth-rate during the four years 1896—99, was 32·3. The mean death-rate during the same four years was 19·5. Therefore in 1900 the birth-rate was 3·6 below the mean of recent years, and the death-rate was 0·5 above the mean of recent years.

The number of births registered in the first quarter was 47, in the second 64, in the third 60, and in the fourth 49.

The number of deaths belonging to the District in the first quarter was 47, in the second 40, in the third 29, and in the fourth 37.

Infant Mortality—Thirty-three of the deaths belonging to the District were of infants under one year old, viz:—8 Whooping Cough, 6 Bronchitis and Pneumonia, 7 Marasmus, 2 Diarrhœa, 3 Convulsions, 2 Premature Birth, 1 Hydrocephalus, 1 Dentition, and 3 accidentally suffocated. Ten were registered in the first

quarter, ten in the second, six in the third, and seven in the fourth quarter of the year. Fifteen were under six months old at the time of death.

Zymotic Diseases—The number of cases notified during the year was 47, viz:—36 Scarlet Fever, 3 Diphtheria, 1 Membranous Croup, 2 Typhoid Fever, 2 Puerperal Fever, and 3 Erysipelas. The deaths from the principal Zymotic Diseases numbered sixteen, viz:—11 Whooping Cough, 1 Membranous Croup, 1 Puerperal Fever, and 3 Diarrhœa. This gives a Zymotic death-rate of 2 per 1,000.

Scarlet Fever—Thirty-six cases were notified during the year. No deaths resulted from this disease, the cases being mostly of a mild type.

Diphtheria—Three cases were notified, and all recovered. No sanitary defects were discovered on the premises.

Membranous Croup—One case was notified in the second quarter, a boy six years old. He was removed to the Workhouse Hospital, and died the following day.

Typhoid Fever—Two cases were reported. Both occurred in Hospital Street, within a short time of one another, but did not appear to be connected in any way. The origin of the disease could not be traced. At one of the houses the back yard required repaving, and at the other the back yard was unpaved and in a filthy state, caused by a large number of fowl being kept.

Diagnosis of Diphtheria and Typhoid Fever—The facilities offered to Medical men in the district, whereby specimens from doubtful cases of Diphtheria and Typhoid Fever are sent, free of charge, to be examined at the Pathological Diagnosis Department at University College, Liverpool, have been made use of in ten cases. Specimens from six doubtful cases of Diphtheria were examined, and in each case the result was negative. The blood from four suspected cases of Typhoid Fever was examined. In two of these the reaction obtained was positive, and in the other two negative.

Puerperal Fever—Two cases were reported, one of which proved fatal. Both cases had been attended by a mid-wife, and precautions were at once taken to prevent the woman attending other lying-in cases until the danger of infection was past. No cause could be traced in either case.

Erysipelas—Three cases were reported, and all recovered.

Isolation Hospital—It is with much satisfaction that I am able to record that considerable progress has been made during the year in the direction of providing Isolation Hospital accommodation for the District. Sub-Committees from the Nantwich Urban and Rural District Councils have met, and agreed upon the formation of a joint Hospital District, under section 279 of the Public Health Act, 1875. A site in the Rural District, on the border of the Urban District, has been selected. At the Local Government Board enquiry, which was held on January 22nd, there was no opposition to the scheme.

The arrangements for the reception of infectious cases from this district at Crewe Hospital have proved very unsatisfactory. Four cases have been sent, one being Typhoid Fever, and three Scarlet Fever. More cases would have been sent if there had been accommodation in the Hospital for them.

Disinfecting Apparatus—As there is no disinfecting apparatus in the district, infected bedding, etc., is occasionally sent to Crewe to be disinfected. This was done in four instances during the year. No doubt when the Isolation Hospital is built a steam disinfecter will be provided in connection therewith.

Infectious Disease Prevention Act, 1890, was formally adopted in the autumn. It gives increased control over the milk supply, and increased powers of disinfection. It prohibits the retention of dead bodies in certain cases, and gives Justices power in certain cases to order dead bodies to be buried. It also gives them power to order an infectious person, without proper lodging or means of isolation, to be detained in Hospital until free from infection. It forbids the throwing of infectious rubbish into ashpits.

Measles—Few cases have occurred in the district during the year, and no deaths were recorded.

Whooping Cough was epidemic during the first and second quarters of the year. Eleven deaths were ascribed to this disease, six in the first, and five in the second quarter. Three of the fatal cases were complicated by Pneumonia and Bronchitis, two by Convulsions, and four by both Pneumonia and Convulsions.

The death-rate from Whooping Cough was 1·4 per 1,000 living.

This disease is one of the most distressing and painful causes of death in very early life. All the victims in this district during the year were children under two years of age. It is plain from this circumstance that the isolation of infected children is a matter of difficulty, and in many cases little or no attempt at isolation is made by the parents. Infectiousness in this disease begins in the early non-spasmodic stage, so that by the time the

disease is recognised, when the characteristic whoop appears, the affected child has probably affected those in its immediate neighbourhood.

Whooping Cough is the most fatal of all the infectious diseases of children under five years of age. If parents could only be made to understand that the disease is a dangerous one, owing to the complications which often result, undoubtedly the death-rate from it would be greatly reduced.

Diarrhœa—Three deaths resulted from this disease, two in the second, and one in the fourth quarter of the year. The death-rate was 0·3 per 1,000, which shows a considerable improvement from last year, when the death-rate was 1·05 per 1,000. The lower death-rate is no doubt due to a great extent to the fact that there was no long spell of hot weather during the summer. A high death-rate from this disease is an invariable accompaniment of a warm dry season.

Leaflets relating to Infectious Diseases, etc.—It was thought advisable to have these drawn up for distribution in the district. They relate to the following:—Scarlet Fever, Typhoid Fever, Puerperal Fever, Diphtheria, Measles, Whooping Cough, Erysipelas, Summer Diarrhœa, Phthisis, and the feeding of Infants.

Lung Diseases—*Phthisis* caused nine deaths—equal to a death-rate of 1·1 per 1,000. *Bronchitis and Pneumonia* was the cause of death in twenty-seven cases, equal to a death-rate of 3·5 per 1,000.

Heart Disease caused fifteen deaths, which is equal to a death-rate of 1·9 per 1,000.

Deaths from Injuries numbered seven. Three infants were overlain in bed and suffocated. One man was drowned while bathing. A boy was run over by a coal waggon and died from the injuries received. A baby died from being scalded, and a girl died from burns received through her clothes accidentally getting on fire.

New Houses—Thirty-one houses have been built, eighteen of which are on the W.C. system, and thirteen on the pail system.

Property condemned—Ten cottages in King's Lane were condemned as being unfit for human habitation.

Paving of Back Yards—One hundred and twelve cases were reported where the yards required paving, and the owners served with notices to that effect. In eighty-four instances the work has been done, greatly improving the sanitary condition of the premises.

Sewage Disposal—During the year the Surveyor has received instructions to prepare a scheme for the disposal of sewage on the bacteriological system. Considerable progress has been made. The preliminary work has been completed, and the plans and estimates are now in hand.

Scavenging and Refuse Removal has been carried out in a satisfactory manner. For some months past the pails in one district, numbering 130, have been worked on the "Congleton Peat System." A report on this will be presented at an early date.

Improved Closet Accommodation—Forty-nine old midden closets have been abolished, fourteen of which were replaced by W.C's, and the remainder by pails. Twenty pail-closets have been converted into W.C's.

Main Sewers have been regularly flushed, and the settling tanks cleaned out. Two tons of alumino-ferrie precipitant have been used in the tanks during the year.

Registered Lodging Houses—There are six in the district, which have been visited almost daily. Five midnight visits were paid by the Inspector. No cause for complaint was found during the past year.

Registered Slaughter Houses—Sixteen in the district. One has been taken off the register. These have been visited weekly, and found in a cleanly state. I must again remark that not one of the slaughter houses in the district meets the requirements of the Local Government Board. The present buildings used as slaughter houses are mostly in such positions as to make it impossible for them to be made to comply with these regulations.

Dairies and Cowsheds—There are fourteen of these, which have been inspected frequently, and found satisfactory.

Water Supply has been satisfactory as regards quantity. The experimental filters have been working the whole year. The analyses of samples taken from these have not been satisfactory. Further experimental filtration is at present going on.

Canal Boats—The Inspector has visited fifty-two Canal Boats during the year. In four cases the cabins were reported as being defective, otherwise the boats were in a satisfactory state.

J. DOUGLAS MUNRO.

FEBRUARY 4th, 1901.

